

lawsuits. H.R. 9 causes fees, and fees on defending infringement would be levied not on the guys who have committed the crime. We are actually leveling fees on the people who are trying to enforce their rights. We are asking people to pay more money in order to enforce their rights.

It destroys, for example, the treble damage awards. Now, what does that mean? If you are a little guy, to get a lawyer to help you, that lawyer has to know he is going to make a profit when getting involved in a suit against a big corporation. Today, they have what they call triple damages. If the corporation knows that it is infringing on the little guy, there are triple damages. They are trying to get rid of those triple damages and say, "No, only actual damages."

What does that mean? The little guy can never afford to hire a lawyer. The lawyers won't get involved. You can see these big corporations, they certainly have all of the legal help they need. Basically, that provision alone neuters the leverage that a small inventor has to get some legal help in his battle to defend his or her own property rights.

This bill, by the way, fails to identify—and it even sometimes protects—lawyers who are operating on bad faith with frivolous lawsuits, as compared to trying to help—let's deter frivolous lawsuits, but let's not do it by eliminating the rights of people who have legitimate claims against big corporations.

There is another bill now emerging. In the House, it is H.R. 9. It is a disaster. We need to make sure people know that the American people have been tipped off and that we are not going to let this happen by the major, huge corporations like Google, which is one of the main groups behind this trying to rip off these little guys. We are not going to allow that to happen, and they are not going to rip us off either.

This has been recognized in the Senate. Like I said, it was stopped the last time, so there is a bill in the Senate, S. 632. Senator COONS has put this bill in. This bill reasserts the condition of willful infringement. Basically, it reinforces the idea that, if a company is willfully infringing, this is something that someone needs to be paid for and compensated for because someone intentionally stepped on his rights. It gives the PTO the discretion to award damages in these cases when you see that a big company has willfully said, We will ignore the fact that we know this group invented it. Ignore that. Just go ahead, and if they try to sue us, we will step on them, or we will get the rules of the game changed in Congress so that they don't have a chance to sue us.

S. 632, the Coons bill in the Senate, specifically allows higher education and smaller entities to be identified as legitimate owners. Thus, we are protecting the actual little guys and their educational institutions. What we also

have in the Senate bill is something that identifies bad faith in these demand letters. There are frivolous lawsuits. It actually gives strength and power to thwart these frivolous lawsuits without damaging the rights of the small inventor and the traditional rights of the American people.

We are up against a major fight, but here we have a good piece of legislation in the Senate, in the Coons bill, S. 632, and in a crony capitalism bill, H.R. 9, here in the House. The American people have to at times get involved or things will go haywire in our country. We don't have the rights and privileges that every American enjoys simply because they are in the Constitution. Over the years, the American people have stepped up when they have seen that their rights were being trampled upon.

The big guys were always around, trying to steal from the little guys, but as we saw in the case of Philo Farnsworth, we have a commitment to America's little guys. As for the men and women who maybe are not rich but who have a creative genius that will uplift all of us, we have made a commitment to them. H.R. 9 breaks that commitment and destroys their ability to actually benefit from their own creative genius.

I would ask my colleagues to spend time reading H.R. 9 and consider the straw man argument—the trolls. Get beyond the slogan, and see what effect it will have, and ask small inventors— independent inventors—and educators what impact the changes in H.R. 9 will have. Once the legislators here in the House do, and once they understand the damage that this will do to the American people and how the little guy is going to be stepped upon, they will vote against it, but they have to have their attention drawn to this.

People are busy here in Washington. The biggest problem is getting the attention of our colleagues to pay attention to a bill like H.R. 9. That is part of what the citizenry has to do if our process is going to work. They need to be talking to their Congressmen. They need to be talking to their Senators. Whether you are an educator and you deal with patents of your educational institution or whether you are an independent inventor and have an idea that will make Americans more productive and more competitive or make our country safer, you are the treasure house of this country, and they are trying to destroy that treasure right now.

I call on my colleagues to join me in opposition to H.R. 9 and to work with the Senate to try to have the Senate bill intertwined and to come to a compromise so we can have a positive bill here in the House and so we can move forward in a positive way to make sure that Americans remain prosperous, that Americans remain secure, and that Americans remain free. That is what our Constitution was all about. That is what Thomas Jefferson was all about, and that is what Benjamin

Franklin was all about. That is what we are supposed to be all about.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IN MEMORY OF FIREFIGHTER DANIEL CORRIGAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of local Santa Barbara, California, firefighter Daniel Corrigan.

Dan was born and raised in Hayward, California, where he played football and attended Moreau Catholic High School. Dan earned his degree in mechanical engineering from Cal Poly Pomona, and he began his firefighting career with the Fresno Fire Department in 2007. In 2013, Dan joined the Santa Barbara City Fire Department, where he made a tremendous impact not only on his colleagues but on the entire community.

Throughout his career, Dan was recognized by his colleagues for his hard work ethic, his considerable intelligence, and enjoyable sense of humor.

That is why we were all so deeply saddened by the unexpected news when Dan passed away 2 weeks ago. He was just 35. His loss came much too early for a beloved hero who devoted so much of himself to serve his community.

Dan is survived by his pregnant fiancée, Sarah; by his son, Jack; by his sisters Debbie and Rosanne; and by his parents, John and Anne.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this sad time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WOMEN'S AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, every year during the month of March, we celebrate the contributions to events in history and modern society by women. We call it Women's History Month, but in my district, in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the month of March is also commemorated as Virgin Islands History Month.

So, in keeping with both customs, I would like to take the time to recognize a few Virgin Islanders who have broken the glass ceiling for women in the upper echelons of law in the territory and, indeed, in the United States, and who inspired generations of young women to do the same:

The Honorable Eileen Ramona Peterson, who became the first female judge in the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1971; the Honorable J'ada Finch-Sheen, who later became the first female sworn in